

CONFIDENTIAL]

# REPORT

ON

## NATIVE PAPERS

FOR THE

Week ending the 7th January 1899.

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## LIST OF NEWSPAPERS.

No.	Names of Newspapers.	Place of publication.	Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.	REMARKS.
<b>BENGALI.</b>					
<i>Weekly.</i>					
1	"Bangavasi" ...	Calcutta ...	25,000	24th and 31st December, 1898.	
2	"Basumati" ...	Ditto ...	15,000	29th December, 1898, and 5th January, 1899.	
3	"Hitaishi" ...	Ditto ...	800		
4	"Hitavadi" ...	Ditto ...	About 4,000	30th December, 1898.	
5	"Mihir-o-Sudhakar" ...	Ditto ...	1,600	30th ditto.	
6	"Prativasi" ...	Ditto ...	...	31st ditto.	
7	"Samay" ...	Ditto ...	3,000		
8	"Sanjivani" ...	Ditto ...	3,000	31st ditto.	
9	"Som Prakash" ...	Ditto ...	1,000	12th ditto.	
<i>Daily.</i>					
1	"Banga Vidya Prakashika"	Calcutta ...	200		
2	"Samvad Prabhakar"	Ditto ...	2,000	3rd to 6th January, 1899	
3	"Samvad Purnachandrodaya"	Ditto ...	200	31st December, 1898, and 2nd January 1899.	
<b>HINDI.</b>					
<i>Fortnightly.</i>					
1	"Marwari Gazette" ...	Calcutta ...	400		
<i>Weekly.</i>					
1	"Bharat Mitra" ...	Calcutta ...	.....	2nd January, 1899.	
2	"Hindi Bangavasi" ...	Ditto ...	6,500	26th December, 1898, and 2nd January, 1899.	
<b>PERSIAN.</b>					
<i>Weekly.</i>					
1	"Hablul Mateen" ...	Calcutta ...	.....	2nd January, 1899.	
2	"Mefta-hur-safar" ...	Ditto ...	.....		
<b>URDU.</b>					
<i>Weekly.</i>					
1	"Darussaltanat and Urdu Guide."	Calcutta ...	320	29th December, 1898.	
2	"General and Gauhariasf"	Ditto ...	330	1st January, 1899.	
<i>Tri-weekly.</i>					
1	"Nusrat-ul-Islam" ...	Calcutta ...	.....		
<b>BENGALI.</b>					
<i>Fortnightly.</i>					
1	"Ulubaria Darpan" ...	Ulubaria ...	.....		
<i>Weekly.</i>					
1	"Bangabandhu" ...	Chandernagore ...	.....		
2	"Bankura Darpan" ...	Bankura ...	572	1st January, 1899.	
3	"Burdwan Sanjivani" ...	Burdwan ...	240		
4	"Chinsura Vartavaha" ...	Chinsura ...	400	25th December, 1898, and 1st January, 1899.	
5	"Education Gazette" ...	Hooghly ...	1,350	30th December, 1898.	
6	"Pallivasi" ...	Kalna ...	475	4th January, 1899.	
<b>BENGALI.</b>					
<i>Weekly.</i>					
1	"Murshidabad Hitaishi" ...	Murshidabad ...	655	28th December, 1898.	
2	"Praukar" ...	Berhampore, Murshidabad.	603	30th ditto.	



No.	Names of Newspapers.	Place of publication.	Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.	REMARKS.
	<b>URIYA.</b>	<b>ORISSA DIVISION.</b>			
	<i>Weekly.</i>				
1	"Sambalpur Hitaishini" ...	Bamra in the Central Provinces.	.....	.....	This paper is said to have some circulation in the Division, but the number of subscribers could not be ascertained.
2	"Samvad Vahika" ...	Balasore ...	150		
3	"Uriya and Navasamvad" ...	Ditto ...	309		
4	"Utkal Dipika" ...	Cuttack ...	400		
	<b>HINDI.</b>	<b>PATNA DIVISION.</b>			
	<i>Monthly.</i>				
1	"Bihar Bandhu" ...	Bankipur ...	About 600		
	<b>URDU.</b>				
	<i>Weekly.</i>				
1	"Al Punch" ...	Bankipur ...	500	9th December, 1892.	
2	"Gaya Punch" ...	Gaya ...	400		
	<b>BENGALI.</b>	<b>RAJSHAHI DIVISION.</b>			
	<i>Weekly.</i>				
1	"Hindu Ranjika" ...	Boalia, Rajshahi ...	243	4th January, 1899.	
2	"Kangal" ...	Cooch Behar ...	.....	4th ditto.	
3	"Rangpur Dikprakash" ...	Kakina, Rangpur ...	180	.....	This paper is not regularly published for want of type.
	<b>HINDI.</b>				
	<i>Monthly.</i>				
1	"Darjeeling Mission ke Masik Samachar Patrika."	Darjeeling ...	.....		
	<b>BENGALI.</b>	<b>DACCA DIVISION.</b>			
	<i>Fortnightly.</i>				
1	"Faridpur Hitaishini" ..	Faridpur ...	755	14th and 29th December, 1898.	
2	"Kasipur Nivasi" ...	Kasipur, Barisal ...	315		
	<i>Weekly.</i>				
1	"Barisal Hitaishi" ...	Barisal ...	300		
2	"Charu Mihir" ...	Mymensingh ...	900	26th December, 1898.	
3	"Dacca Prakash" ...	Dacca ...	2,400	1st January, 1899.	
4	"Sanjay" ...	Faridpur ...	.....		
5	"Saraswat Patra" ...	Dacca ...	About 500	31st December, 1898.	
	<b>ENGLISH AND BENGALI.</b>				
	<i>Weekly.</i>				
1	"Dacca Gazette" ...	Dacca ...	500	2nd January, 1899.	
	<b>BENGALI.</b>	<b>CHITTAGONG DIVISION.</b>			
	<i>Fortnightly.</i>				
1	"Tripura Hitaishi" ...	Comilla ...	450	1st January, 1899.	
	<i>Weekly.</i>				
1	"Sansodhini" ...	Chittagong ...	120		
	<b>BENGALI.</b>	<b>ASSAM.</b>			
	<i>Fortnightly.</i>				
1	"Paridarsak" ...	Sylhet ...	.....	14th and 29th December, 1898.	
2	"Silchar" ...	Silchar, Cachar ...	340		







## II.--HOME ADMINISTRATION.

## (a)—Police.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Charu Mihir* of the 26th December complains of the prevalence of thefts in Ghatail thana within the Tangail subdivision of the Mymensingh district. The Police authorities ought to keep a sharp eye on chaukidars and daffadars, as the latter do not perform their duties properly. An efficient police arrangement ought to be made for all the thanas in the Tangail subdivision, as theft, dacoity, rioting and zamindari oppression are very prevalent there.

CHARU MIHIR,  
Dec. 26th, 1898.

2. The same paper says that recently three or four cases of dacoity occurred within the jurisdiction of the Gopalpur thana in the Mymensingh district. The dacoits are said to have been in possession of fire-arms. The people of Gopalpur are greatly alarmed.

CHARU MIHIR.

3. The *Murshidabad Hitaishi* of the 28th December has heard that in the Murshidabad district a man will be allowed to keep only so many fire-arms as the Sub-Inspector of Police within whose jurisdiction he lives thinks it right to allow him to possess. Many rich merchants and others have for a long time possessed valuable fire-arms for purposes of hunting and self-defence, and no mischief has ever been done by them. The attitude of the Magistrate this year in this matter is, therefore, all the more strange. If the gentlemen referred to above are not allowed licenses for all the fire-arms in their possession, will they be given the price of the arms which they will have to deposit with the Government? It is quite unreasonable that the daroga of a thana should be thought a competent person to judge of the needs of rich and respectable people. Last year licenses were not allowed to *dhangars*. This resulted in the loss of their crops, in consequence of the ravages of wild beasts. They have been entreating the authorities to give them licenses for arms, and the writer would have written on their behalf, if the Magistrate's attitude in the matter had not been so unfavourable.

MURSHIDABAD  
HITAISHI,  
Dec. 28th, 1898.

4. The same paper complains of the prevalence of theft in Panchthupi in the Murshidabad district and of the inability of the police to trace the thieves. On the 20th August last a daring theft was committed in the house of Babu Radhika Prasad Chandra, the thief having broken open two or three locks and abstracted about five or six hundred rupees in money, jewellery, cloth, &c. The case, however, remains untraced up to this day. Another theft of a very daring nature was committed between 6 A.M. and 10 A.M., on the 23rd December last, in which the thief stole valuable ornaments from the house of Babu Ram Lal Banik. This case, too, has not yet been traced. Many other thefts have of late occurred in the village, and people have been astonished to see the inefficiency of the police. The police-station, Baronga, within the jurisdiction of which the village is situated, is four miles from it, and before information of thefts can reach the thana people, or the latter can in their lazy style reach the scene of occurrence for local investigation, the thieves in many cases succeed in disposing of their booty. The attention of the District Superintendent of Police is therefore invited to the necessity of either establishing a police-station in Panchthupi or making arrangements for proper watch and ward in the village.

MURSHIDABAD  
HITAISHI.

5. A correspondent complains in the *Hitavadi* of the 30th December that the police constables of Calcutta openly extort a pice each from the drivers of the hackney coaches and carts for each journey. The *gundas* of Barabazar also extort a pice each from the cart and hackney coach drivers. The police constable and the *gunda* are sometimes seen standing side by side and ill-treating the poor drivers for this illegal fee. On the other side of the Howrah bridge *gundas* even go the length of forcibly carrying away something from the carts.

HITAVADI,  
Dec. 30th, 1898.



SANJIVANI,  
Dec. 31st, 1898.

6. The *Sanjivani* of the 31st December says that, considering the popularity which Sir John Woodburn has won by his noble nature within the short period of his rule, it is impossible to believe that anybody can be so displeased with him as to insult him by casting a shoe at him. The man who tried to insult His Honour in this manner on the day of the opening of the Dufferin Zanzana Hospital, was either a drunkard or a lunatic.

DACCA PRAKASH,  
January 1st, 1899

7. The *Dacca Prakash* of the 1st January says that loss of life and property is being frequently occasioned by the passage of steamers in the rivers, and yet the authorities do not attend to the matter. The other day a steamer came into collision with a boat on the Dhaleswari near Munshiganj, in foggy weather, thereby breaking the vessel into pieces, sinking its cargo, and crushing a passenger to death.

(b)—Working of the Courts.

CHARU MIHIR,  
Dec. 26th, 1898.

8. The *Charu Mihir* of the 26th December says that, considering the unsatisfactory manner in which the old Court-house in Mymensingh town was repaired last year, it has not been advisable to entrust the same contractors with the construction of a new Court building. Hardly was the repair finished when the roof became leaky. In the month of *Aswin* the writer saw water coming down in torrents through the roof of the old Court building. This was due to want of a proper supervision of the contractors' work. It is said that the Public Works Department is extremely partial to the contractors in question. An enquiry ought to be made into the working of this Department.

HITAVADI,  
Dec. 30th, 1898.

9. The *Hitavadi* of the 30th December has heard complaints against Babu Krishna Dayal Pramanik, Subdivisional Officer of Satkhira, in the Khulna district. The writer does not know how far these complaints are true, and hopes that Babu Krishna Dayal will do nothing to give rise to such serious complaints.

HITAVADI.

10. A correspondent of the same paper complains against the Nazir of Amta in the Howrah district. The former Nazir consulted the convenience of the parties, but the present Nazir is far from doing that. Respectable gentlemen are insulted by him. It is a regret, observes the editor, that the Nazir of the Court of an amiable munsif like Jogendra Babu should be the wielder of such a harsh tongue. It would be well for the Nazir to conduct himself more courteously and to consult the interest of the public.

HITAVADI.

11. In the last Sessions of the Calcutta High Court, writes the same paper, Mr. Justice Hill sentenced Amiran to death for murdering his faithless wife and her paramour. Amiran is a Musalman. Once his wife eloped with her paramour, but Amiran pardoned her and gave her a place in his home. His wife eloped again, and this time, too, Amiran was ready to forgive her; but she did not agree to return to him. This enraged Amiran, and he killed his wife and her paramour. The European does not look upon a faithless wife in the same light as a Hindu or a Musalman; and a European Judge cannot therefore be an impartial judge of the Hindu or the Musalman mind. It is to be hoped that Sir John Woodburn will take Amiran's case into his consideration and commute the sentence of death into some other punishment.

HITAVADI.

12. A correspondent of the same paper complains of the conduct of Mr. Garrett, Subdivisional Officer of Gobindpur, in the Manbhum district. On the 18th December last, Mr. Garrett came to the Khonta station on the Jheria branch of the East Indian Railway, and all of a sudden began to call the station-master names. He called him "शूद्र का बाब्बा" and wanted to know why his parcels had not been sent to him. The station-master most courteously replied that the parcels had not been delivered, because no one had come with the necessary receipt and fare to take delivery of them. This reply



so much enraged Mr. Garrett that he at once fell upon the poor station-master and began to kick and beat him mercilessly. The station-master took to his heels in order to save himself from the hands of Mr. Garrett, who entered the office and threw a stool at the guard of No. 16 goods train, who was sitting there and did not *sa'am* the Subdivisional Officer. At last the Subdivisional Officer left the station, taking his parcels without a receipt or without paying the necessary fare.

The editor calls upon the Government to institute an enquiry into this complaint. If it be a true complaint, the offending Magistrate should be taught a lesson. If the Government had not invariably tried to shield the Civilians, but had done justice in all cases, the public would not have had to hear of such complaints of injustice and high-handedness. A Magistrate who is oppressive and breaks the law is not expected to maintain peace and promote good government.

(d)—Education.

13. The Lieutenant-Governor, writes the *Bangavasi* of the 31st December, has ordered that a village school-master should be relieved of his duties as a village postmaster when his serving in this two-fold capacity interferes with his duties as a teacher. The teachers of no less than 745 pathsalas in Bengal serve as village postmasters and eke out their small pay by the small allowance they get from the Postal Department. The Lieutenant-Governor's order will materially reduce the slender resources of the village school-master.

BANGAVASI,  
Dec. 31st, 1898.

14. The *Sanjivani* of the 31st December has the following:—  
Boys passing the middle vernacular examination could so long read for the mukhtar-ship examination or enter the native medical schools or the survey schools. And they were made to read a large variety of subjects: Bengali grammar, Bengali literature, geography, physical geography, physics, the whole of arithmetic, mensuration, and geometry, and occasionally botany and chemistry. Government wanted them to acquire some fitness for the responsible careers which were open to them. But though those careers have been now closed against them, the course for the middle examination remains as large and heavy as before. This is causing much harm to boys of the poor and middle classes who, having still to read much for the middle examination, cannot find time to read sufficient English to fit them for the fourth class of an entrance school after passing that examination. Many well-to-do people are for this reason taking away their sons from the middle schools, and even those who, for want of means or want of English schools near their homes, are obliged to keep their sons in the middle schools are making their boys devote their attention principally to English and arithmetic instead of frittering away their energy on a multitude of useless subjects. The action of the Director of Public Instruction in placing the first class of a middle English school on the same footing as the fourth class of an entrance school has induced many middle school boys to join the entrance schools, because they see there is no longer any advantage in passing the middle examination. The prospect before the middle schools is, indeed, extremely gloomy. If the authorities do not see fit to restore to the boys who pass the middle examination their old privileges, the curricula of the middle schools ought to be so altered as to enable those boys to enter the third class of an entrance school. For this purpose, the teaching of physics, physical geography, mensuration and *subhankari* in the middle English schools should be discontinued, and in their place should be put Sanskrit and algebra in the first two classes. These two subjects can be taught by the existing staff and will entail no additional expenditure.

SANJIVANI,  
Dec. 31st, 1898.

The middle vernacular schools have become perfectly useless. The only thing that the boys who pass the middle vernacular examination is fit for is service as accountants under tradesmen or zamindars. But zamindars and tradesmen care only for good hand-writing and good accountants; they care little for pass certificates. If these schools are kept up, a change in their



curricula, similar to that suggested in the case of the middle English schools, should be introduced.

But, instead of making so small a change, it would be better to alter the name and character of the middle English schools altogether. They should be converted into lower class English schools, in the first class of which the same course should be studied as in the fourth class of entrance schools. In the sixth class of these schools boys should be taught the English alphabet and English notation and numeration and English hand-writing, and from the third class they should appear at the upper primary examination. In the first and second classes, the utmost attention should be paid to English, and a little of Sanskrit together with Bengali literature, should also be taught.

As this change may affect the middle vernacular schools, and consequently the boys who intend to enter the normal schools, the course of reading in the middle vernacular schools should be extended from three to four years, and a similar change should also be made in the case of the normal schools.

(e)—*Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.*

CHARU MIHIR,  
Dec. 26th, 1898.

15. The *Charu Mihir* of the 26th December has learnt that the contractors and overseers of the Mymensingh District Board have become very arbitrary in consequence of there being no proper supervision over them. In some cases contractors have been paid the amounts of their bills, although the roads for which the bills were submitted were not repaired. Many new roads are about to be constructed, whilst some old ones are almost impassable for want of repairs. The Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are requested to make arrangements for a supervision of the work done by contractors and overseers.

CHARU MIHIR.

16. A correspondent of the same paper apprehends water scarcity in the next hot season in Narayandaha and the neighbouring villages in the Mymensingh district, if the river is not dredged and tanks are not excavated in the villages away from the river bank. A dredged river will not only give good drinking-water, but form an excellent trade route.

BASUMATI,  
Dec 29th, 1898.

17. The *Basumati* of the 29th December has the following:—  
We are sorry to learn from the Government's Resolution on the working of the Local Self-Government institutions in Bengal during the past year, that there was generally a falling off in the attendance of the non-official members of the Local Boards. This was owing chiefly to those members feeling no interest in their work. The Local Boards can spend only what the District Boards are pleased to allot to them, and have to spend even that under strict rules. The members of the Local Boards have, therefore, to act, as it were, mechanically; and they, therefore, consider it unnecessary to attend every meeting. This is not right, and it is the cause of much harm. Attempts are being now made to curtail the privilege of local self government, and even the Municipality of Calcutta is intended to be placed under greater official control. The Local Self-Government institutions in the mufassal may at any moment, and on the slightest defect being discovered in their working, be deprived of their independence. The members of the Local Boards should, therefore, be careful not to neglect their duties. The Government, on its part, should try to make the work of the Boards more interesting to their members. The duty of the Local Boards is generally to look after matters connected with village roads, village schools, village dispensaries and village sanitation. If any member of a Board repeatedly fails to secure funds for works which he considers necessary, he naturally feels disheartened and loses all interest in his work. It is of the first importance, therefore, that the Government should make arrangements for placing adequate funds at the disposal of the Local Boards.

The Government is not in favour of extending the system of Union Committees at present: and it has been led to this decision by the failure of some of the Committees which have been already formed. On the whole, however, the Union Committees have worked satisfactorily. The Committees in the Midnapore, Hooghly, Khulna, Tippera and the 24-Parganas districts have all worked well. A serious charge, it is true, has been brought against the



Daspur Union in the Midnapore district, but we cannot express any opinion on the matter so long as we do not hear what the accused party has got to say.

Supposing, for argument's sake, that the Daspur Union is guilty of the charge brought against it, would it be fair to refuse to create more Union Committees, because one Committee has done something wrong? The Commissioner of the Burdwan Division writes:—

"It cannot be said that the utility of the Union Committees has been in any degree commensurate with the trouble they cause to District Boards and Local Officers."

The work which was done by Union Committees may appear trifling to the officials, but small as it was, it was considered by the village people sufficient for their purposes. The question of the repair of a village road, or the question of the excavation of a well, may appear to a District Board too small to deserve any attention; but it ought to be remembered that these are the very questions which affect the people most vitally. The existence of Union Committees will be fully justified if they can remove such needs of the villagers. The province will, in fact, fail to enjoy the full benefit of Local Self-Government so long as more Union Committees are not established. That the Local Boards in many places are not working satisfactorily is simply because they have not Union Committees to guide them and enable them to spend their money judiciously. Some twenty to twenty-five thanas combined send only one representative to a Local Board, and it is not possible for one man to keep himself thoroughly informed of the wants of such a large area. It is only Union Committees, each composed of five or six villages, that can enable the District and Local Boards to do better justice to all the villages under their control and remove the real wants of the villagers. But, for this purpose, it is necessary for the District Boards to place more money in the hands of the Local Boards and their Committees. Government can easily enable the District Boards to do this.

18. The *Dacca Prakash* of the 1st January writes as follows:—

Unjust acts of the Dacca Municipality.

The Ramna *maidan* on the north of Dacca town is included within the jurisdiction of the Dacca Municipality and is the pleasure-ground of the Dacca public in general and of the English residents in particular. Of the many roads passing through and by this *maidan*, one, namely, the Ramna Road, is connected with the Dacca-Mymensingh Road. The roads outside the municipal limits have always been repaired and that without demur by the Dacca District Board. But from last year the District Board has been most unjustly saddled with the expenses of the repair of the portion of this road lying within municipal limits, the Dacca Municipality levying the taxes on the garden-houses and shops abutting on this part of the road. When the Magistrate-Chairman and others saddled the Board with the cost of the maintenance of this part of the road, we objected to the arrangement as a member of the Board. Several other members too strongly protested against the proposal, pointing out its iniquity. But the Magistrate-Chairman having expressed his displeasure at this opposition, even the objectors at last voted for the proposal. Finding it useless under these circumstances to protest any more, we left the meeting without voting. The Board being thus saddled with the expenses of the maintenance of the road laid aside every other work, and neglecting all the other roads in the district, then in a state of damage in consequence of the earthquake, set itself to repair the Ramna Road. Other projected works are not as a rule executed in a year or in a year and a-half, but the repair of the Ramna Road was finished in a few days. The Municipality used to spend only Rs. 150 in a year on the maintenance of this road. But the Board spent Rs. 1,409 on its repair in the course of a few days, besides sanctioning hundreds of rupees for its periodical repair.

We have no wish to disparage the District Board by publishing a long list of the unjust expenses which it is bound to incur in many matters for the sake only of the 8 or 10 European residents of Dacca and of the Dacca Municipality. We should not object to thousands of rupees being spent for the comfort of Europeans, for they are the lords of the country and can do just what they please. But we are extremely sorry to see the cruelty which the Sahebs of Dacca practise upon the 23 lakhs of people in the Dacca district

DACCA PRAKASH,  
Jan. 1st, 1899.



out of partiality for the Dacca Municipality. We are obliged to protest from time to time because we fail to understand why of all Englishmen—a people who show kindness everywhere—the handful of Englishmen in Dacca town should be so cruel to the 23 lakhs inhabiting the district. We now come to the really important point. When saddling the District Board with the expenses of the maintenance of the Ramna Road, the District Magistrates and other officials learned in the law did not pay any heed to our objection. But we now see from a Municipal Resolution that a letter, No. 968G., and dated the 25th August 1898, was sent from the Commissioner's office to the Chairman of the District Board stating that the Board's undertaking this cost was illegal. The Chairman of the Board having informed the Municipality of this, it has adopted a resolution to the effect that, as its income is small and the road in question forms a part of the Mymensingh Road, the cost of its maintenance should be borne by the District Board. But upon this principle every road within the Dacca Municipality should be maintained by the District Board, for all such roads are connected with the roads within the Board's jurisdiction. Johnson Road, for instance, is a part of the Mymensingh Road, while the Demra Road runs from Sankharibazar in Dacca town to Nawabpur outside of it.

The annual income of the Dacca Municipality exceeds a lakh and a-half, while that of the District Board is much smaller. Leaving out the wealthy family of Bhagyakal, who live in Calcutta, the incomes of the entire mufassal population combined will not equal the income of the Dacca millionaires. The 23 lakhs in the mufassal do not possess even a fraction of the jewellery owned by the residents of Dacca town. The townspeople indulge in the luxury of cleansing their privies with filtered water, but many in the mufassal cannot get even muddy water to drink. The townspeople, though provided with dispensaries in their house-corners, receive medicine and medical treatment gratis at hospitals maintained with mufassal aid; but the mufassal people, though ailing all their lives, do not get medicine even to buy or a doctor to tell a medicine. Is it not cruel (we will not say treacherous) to promote the comfort of the rate-payers of the municipality with money levied from the mufassal people by promises of roads, water and medical treatment? But what is the good of speaking of these grievances? Government does not redress our grievances even when informed thereof. Our writings do no good; they only procure for us the displeasure of the local authorities. But we speak out from time to time only because the limits of our endurance are passed and the grief these oppressions create is so poignant as to make us lose our fear of the officials.

(f)—Questions affecting the land.

BANGAVASI,  
Dec. 14th, 1898.

19. The Government, writes the *Bangavasi* of the 14th December, is offended when a zamindar or a talukdar unwarrantably enhances rents. In khas mahals, however, the Government enhances rents most arbitrarily.

Excessive enhancement of khas mahal rents.

In the khas mahal in the Diamond Harbour subdivision of the 24-Parganas district the rent of *layek patit* or culturable waste lands was lately fixed at Rs. 2-8, that of *bastu* tank and garden at Rs. 8, and that of bazar *bastu* at Rs. 14. Mr. Buckland has enhanced these rents and fixed the rent of *layek patit* lands at Rs. 8, that of *bastu* tank at Rs. 16, that of garden at Rs. 22, and that of bazar *bastu* at Rs. 25. This enhancement has proved painfully heavy for the raiyats, and it is hoped that the Lieutenant-Governor will take their case into his favourable consideration.

(g)—Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation.

FARIDPUR  
HITAISHINI,  
Dec. 14th, 1898.

20. The *Faridpur Hitaishini* of the 14th December complains that the construction of the road from Mulfatganj to Kedarpur in the Faridpur district is being badly superintended by the Madaripur Local Board. Up to this

A projected road in the Faridpur district.

time earth has been unevenly thrown on only a small portion of the projected road and only two ordinary bridges have been constructed. It is hoped that the District Board will carefully superintend the construction of the road.



21. A correspondent of the *Charu Mihir* of the 26th December says that the road from the Mymensingh ferry ghat to Ilaspur and thence to Durgapur, in the Mymensingh district, has been extremely bad since the earthquake, and the portion of it from Syamganj to the Ilaspur ferry ghat is in an even worse condition. The road and all the bridges over it ought to be made pukka.

CHARU MIHIR,  
Dec. 26th, 1898.

22. A correspondent of the *Prativasi* of the 31st December complains that a relative of his could not find, on the 22nd December last, at the Khulna station, any intermediate female carriage in the train which starts from that station in the morning. He was obliged to send his family by the third class. No drinking-water is to be had on this line, except at Bangaon and Jessore, and even at those stations, it is given only to those who purchase food. There are no privies even in the second class carriages of the local trains. Several intermediate class carriages have been converted into second class carriages by dint of rubbing and repainting.

PRATIVASI,  
Dec. 31st, 1898.

23. The *Tripura Hitaishi* of the 1st January says that at the Laksam station intending passengers have to suffer great inconvenience in this cold weather, as they have to wait for trains in the open air. The Lieutenant-Governor said that the Divisional Commissioner would attend to the matter, but the grievance still remains unredressed. It is hoped that Mr. Collier, the kind Divisional Commissioner, will remove this inconvenience of the passengers.

TRIPURA HITAIISHI,  
Jan. 1st, 1899.

(h)—General.

24. The *Hitavadi* of the 30th December refers to the case of Ballal Bihari Datta, the details of which were published in a previous issue of the paper (*vide* Report on Native Papers for week ending the 3rd December, 1898, paragraph 24). It was expected that the Postmaster would redress the wrongs of the injured gentleman. It is well known that justice is not always done in a law Court. The Postal authorities no doubt know this, and yet the Postmaster-General, Bengal, has not instituted any enquiry, leaving the matter to the decision of the law Court. Considering the serious nature of the case, one expected that the Postal authorities would institute an enquiry into it, at least for the sake of the fair fame of the Department. But their conduct has disappointed the public.

HITAVADI,  
Dec. 30th, 1898.

25. The same paper has the following:—  
The Plague Commission. The Plague Commission are taking the evidence of plague doctors and experienced plague officers in all parts of the country. In the beginning of December last was held the first sitting of this Commission, and the Commission has already recorded the opinion of ten or twelve officers of rank. Their evidence, however, has disclosed nothing new. They have only repeated what was disclosed in the weekly returns published by the Government, and in the reports and articles published in the newspapers. We have been compelled to spend a good deal upon the Commission, but we are, as before, still in the dark.

HITAVADI.

None of the witnesses examined has been able to say definitely how plague was imported into this country. One said that it was imported from China, another ascribed it to Africa, while, in the opinion of a third, it was produced by the rotting of grain, in Mandavi in Bombay. Many held the accumulated filth of the Bombay town responsible for the outbreak of the epidemic. Mr. Vincent, Police Commissioner of Bombay, assigned a strange cause. In his opinion plague was imported into Bombay from Kumayun by the *sadhus* who came down to Bombay from the Himalayas during the months of May to August 1896, and took up their quarters in Mandavi. This novel theory will no doubt strike the public as very strange. The *sadhus* must have passed through many places before arriving at Bombay. They, no doubt, went the round of all the places of pilgrimage on their way there. Why did they not spread the contagion in those places? Before expounding his new theory Mr. Vincent ought to have enquired whether other places had, like Bombay, caught the contagion from the *saahus*. Why, again, did he not disclose his new theory so long? Why



did he keep it locked up in his mind for the edification of the Plague Commission? Did he intend to take the credit of expounding a new theory of plague, seeing that no one had said anything new about it?

Dr. Lawrie has pointed out many defects in M. Haffkine's system of inoculation. Dr. Gallioti said that he had discovered a new remedy for plague. He inoculated plague patients with plague serum imported from Italy, and 75 per cent. of these were cured. This witness, however, did not disclose how many patients he had inoculated with his plague serum. Dr. Weir, the Health Officer of Bombay, deposed that he had discovered the existence of plague in that city long before it was declared to be infected. The Commission ought to have asked this wise witness why he had not disclosed this fact before, so that steps might be taken in time to prevent the outbreak of the fell epidemic. It is also strange that in 1896, when the symptoms of plague were first discovered in Bombay and Dr. Vegas gave expression to his suspicion about the existence of plague in the city, this Dr. Weir pooh-poohed his suspicion, and up to October reported deaths from plague as deaths from other causes.

The evidence taken down by the Commission has not also established the necessity of segregation as a preventive measure. Many of the witnesses deposed that segregation nowhere succeeded in preventing the spread of the epidemic or checking its violence. The weekly returns show that few deaths from plague occurred among the relatives of plague patients who were segregated in order to prevent the spread of the contagion. If it is true that other people are more susceptible to contagion than the relatives of plague patients, we fail to understand why the authorities are still hesitating to abolish segregation, and thus remove a source of great inconvenience to the people.

We also fail to understand why the Commission did not examine Dr. Blaney before they left Bombay. Dr. Blaney has been for a long time collecting facts and materials concerning plague, and has had many plague patients under his observation. Was he not examined because he had strongly protested against the Government's plague policy? Or have the Commission been instructed by the Secretary of State not to take down the evidence of private scientists and medical men? If it is not intended to impartially consult the opinion of all medical men in order to arrive at a correct decision, why is this farce being enacted at the public cost?

After leaving Bombay the Commission examined witnesses in Bangalore and Dharwar. Their evidence too disclosed nothing new. It is our belief that the Commission will achieve nothing new. After no inconsiderable waste of public money, the mountain in labour will bring forth a mouse. The working of the Plague Commission has already proved that our belief is well-founded. We do not know how many more errors the Government will commit in connection with the plague and how long the Indian people will have to suffer the consequences of its shortsighted policy.

Plague and the thoughtlessness and high-handedness of plague officers have caused the Indian people loss of life, loss of money, and loss of peace of mind. Many abodes of peace have been converted into scenes of strife and struggle. The ignorant and helpless people, all terrified, are watching the progress of the plague and the movements of the plague officers, and are piteously begging for safety of life, honour and property. But the wise Government has been much more terrified than the people by the apparition of the plague monster and does not know what to do. This is why none of the measures adopted by it have proved efficacious. These measures are increasing the sufferings of the people and leading them to form wrong opinions of the Government's policy. Unfortunately, however, nothing has been able to bring the Government to its senses. The public exchequer has been emptied in maintaining a costly plague establishment, and the Government has now no funds to spare even for the purpose of cleansing the towns. The municipalities are in debt, and yet the authorities will not change their policy.

### III.—LEGISLATIVE.

26. The *Basumati* of the 29th December suggests the appointment of Babu Sita Nath Rai, late Sheriff of Calcutta, to the vacancy about to be caused in the Supreme Legislative Council by the retirement of Babu Joy

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The two vacancies in the  
Supreme Legislative Council.



Govinda Law, and the appointment of the Hon'ble Babu Surendra Nath Banerji in the place of the late Maharaja Lachmeswar Singh of Darbhanga. Babu Surendra Nath will be a fit successor of the late Maharaja, and it is hoped that his claim will be given preference over those of others.

27. A vacancy, writes the *Hitavadi* of the 30th December, is soon going to be caused in the Supreme Legislative Council by the expiry of the Hon'ble Babu Joy Govinda Law's term of office. The selection of a man for this seat rests with the Government, and it is the desire of all that an able man should be selected. Mr. R. D. Mehta is a merchant of repute. The people as well as the Government have confidence in his ability. He possesses many good qualities, and he is always ready to take part in a good cause. He is also well-versed in politics, and his recent articles in the *Englishman* on the currency question are a proof of his mastery over that intricate subject. To the Government too his qualifications are well known, and it has done honour to him by conferring on him the title of C. I. E. The selection of Mr. Mehta in the place of Babu Joy Govinda will give the public very great satisfaction. The selection of a Parsi gentleman enjoying the confidence of the Indian public will be regarded as one of the good acts of Lord Elgin's administration.

HITAVADI,  
Dec. 30th, 1898.

#### VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

28. The *Basumati* of the 29th December has the following:—

Lord Elgin. Lord Elgin, for four years we have revered you as a god, loved you with our whole heart, and regarded you with affection as our own; and though you have not listened to us, we have still, like foolish children, made unreasonable demands upon you, taking you as one nearest and dearest to us. We have sought your protection in distress. That is why, in bidding you farewell, we feel tears flowing to our eyes. It is only natural that such should be the case. But how is it that we find ourselves unable to cry? Memory acts as the companion of grief, and the more we remember the virtues of him for whom we mourn, the more do they feed and nurse our grief and pain our hearts. Unfortunately in the present case our memory fails to supply any fuel to feed the sorrow in our heart. When four years ago in England you accepted the office of Viceroy, how many were the assurances you gave and the resolutions you made to promote our welfare! What we then understood you to say was that you would while in this country sympathise with the Indians in their weal and woe, and, laying aside all other work, devote all your time and energy to the task of promoting their welfare, and that you would be a father to them, wiping away with your own hands the tears of the helpless. We were in an ecstasy of joy, and we thought it was only proper that you should act in that way, for your relations with the Indians were not new, but had existed for a long time past. The expectations entertained by your late father of promoting our happiness and prosperity—but which could not unfortunately be fulfilled in his case—would, we thought, come to be cherished by you. It was our expectation that under your rule an impenetrable armour would cover our bodies; that misfortune and calamity would in our case prove perfectly innocuous; that it would be given to us to pass our days in happiness and prosperity. How many were the hopes and aspirations that then arose in our breast. How eager and anxious we were to have a look at your beautiful countenance and fair person. When we saw you installed on the throne of India, we worshipped you in our hearts as a god incarnate. We remained for some days in this frame of mind. When after some time we found you willing to grant the *abdar* of the Lancashire weavers, when we found you wavering in your mind in the matter of the cotton duties, the fact struck us as an illustration of the saying that "even the sages are liable to error." To err is human, and we thought that this undue partiality to English interests was an error on your part. It is not our nature to think ill of others. Your frowning attitude in the matter of the Bombay plague alarmed us, and we were at a loss to know what to think of it. The conclusion at which we at last arrived was that it was the effect of that contagious disease which attacks all English rulers when they come to this country. That disease went on increasing in virulence, till all its symptoms manifested themselves. You next

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became infected with jaundice, and the Indians began to appear to you, not in their true colour, but in a different one. Even then did we entertain the hope that proper medical treatment would probably succeed in effecting a cure, but no good physician was forthcoming, and things remained much as they were. But the day Tilak was arraigned for fomenting sedition, and a dolorous outcry was raised from Comorin to the Himalayas, you stood out before us in your true colours; we found out the brass that you are. We saw that the gems and precious stones which adorned your person were all artificial chemical products, and we were thunderstruck. We now saw the Natu brothers deprived of their property and deported. We were quite bewildered and extremely exercised in our minds, not so much for Tilak or the Natus as for you. It was now that a change came over the spirit in which we looked at you and thought of you, and the eager enthusiasm we had felt in upholding your good name and reputation showed signs of diminution. We thought that Tilak was probably guilty of shortsightedness; that the Natus, though innocent, might nevertheless be secretly implicated in the crimes with which they were charged; but the conclusion was irresistible that you had never practised forbearance. Instead of being firm and unshaken like the Himalayas and grave and profound like the deep sea you betrayed a fickle and wavering disposition and made yourself the laughing-stock of the world. Next came the Tala riots. As regards the suppression of such disturbances, instead of discouraging impatience and recklessness on the part of local officials, you became anxious and impatient to proclaim the martial law. What are the virtues that we shall sing at this time of bidding you farewell? Do you point them out to us, for we remember none. We Indians are lacking in strength and intelligence. We are devotedly loyal to you, and willing even to lay down our lives for you. Our only fault is that when we cannot bear anything that is unbearable, we sometimes pathetically cry, and approach you with prayers. Even these prayers you disliked. You could not put up with them, so painful did they seem to you, and, instead of trying to console us in the hour of our distress with reassuring words, you gagged us, passed the sedition law, and increased the rigour of the Criminal Procedure Code. You have not left us even the means of crying out in the hour of danger and affliction. Say what are those virtues, the remembrance of which will bring tears to our eyes for you. It is impossible to say how long it will take to relieve India of the heavy burden which has been placed upon her in consequence of the policy you followed in the frontier war. You have seen with your own eyes the misery and destitution that has been brought on countless Indian homes, and the loss of valuable English life that has been caused by this war. You have heard with your own ears the praise or censure, as the case may be, of your frontier policy in England and foreign countries. Say if we are wrong, and we shall correct ourselves. At the Darbar held in the North-Western Provinces you referred to the fact that owing to want of independence in conducting the work of administration, you could not do yourself the pleasure of pleasing the Indian people, and that the necessity you were under of carrying out the behests of the Secretary of State prevented you from doing your duty in the way you should have wished to do it. If that is your belief, it is a great consolation to us, and we can praise you for your sincerity. But we do not care to believe it. It is our conviction that if you had made the endeavour, you could have made us happy in a large measure, but that you could not do it because you allowed yourself to be swayed by evil counsel. Every Viceroy has, it is true, to carry out the mandates of the Secretary of State; but if all Viceroys had grieved us in this way, we would have been, by this time, improved off the face of the earth, and India would have become a vast burning-ground. And now our prayer is, do not forget this weak and poor India. If, while in your native country, you make a sincere and clear statement before your countrymen of what you have done and felt in this country, even that will be a great service done to us. And now in bidding you farewell, we pray to God that you may be happy in your native land and in the society of your friends and relatives.

29. The same paper thus addresses Lord Curzon:—

Lord Curzon.

You are wise, discreet and intelligent, and it is your habit to carefully observe the march of events. The latent principles which govern cause and effect, happiness and misery,



righteousness and sin in this world, are not, in fact, nothing is, unknown to you. You are well versed in archæology, and a master of statesmanship. You are conversant with all the facts of our history, past as well as present. You possess genius and keensightedness, and in the light of the events of our past and present history, you see the future with the eye of a prophet, and like one who knows the past, the present and the future, you can read even what is writ on the roll of our destiny. Even the secret recesses of our hearts are open to your gaze. We have nothing to conceal from you, nothing to expound to you with a parade of words. You are a man who has made a great name for yourself. Born in a respectable and wealthy family and brought up in its midst, you have, by means of self-help and self-reliance, secured success in life. You have seen for yourself what it is that makes for the happiness or unhappiness of all classes of the population. You have carefully made yourself acquainted with the sincerity of sincere people as well as with the wickedness of wicked men. What others learn from hearsay, you have learnt by personal observation. You have mixed with the poor, cultivated the acquaintance of the middle classes, and spent much of your time in the society of wealthy people. Your travels, both in your own country and in foreign lands, have served to make you a profound reader of human nature. Could the people of this country, which you visited as a traveller some years ago, even conceive in their dreams that this vast Indian continent, stretching from the sea to the Himalayas, would one day lie prostrate at your feet and claim you as her absolute master? The fates are propitious to you, and, but for the sincere and pure heart which is yours, the present auspicious hour would have never come for you. It is as the reward of your pious deeds that you have gained the Viceroyalty of India—this great scene of nature's majesty and magnificence—the sovereignty of the country once ruled by Aja, Ansuman, Dilip and other kings of the solar race. It is as the reward of your pious deeds that you have become the guide and director of the administrative policy of the country which was once governed by the laws of Manu, Parasar, Yajnavalkya and other Hindu sages; that you have been called on to maintain peace in the land which witnessed the exploits of Bhim, Arjun, Drona, Karna and the other heroes of the *Mahabharat*, and that you have been invested with the sovereign power in the country whose ruler discharged his kingly duty by decreeing the banishment of his queen in order that he might thereby please his subjects. You have doubtless realised the heavy responsibilities of your high position. So pained and depressed in their minds are the people of India at this moment, that their great past they feel disinclined to take as anything else than a fable. They will think themselves supremely blest if they can receive at your hands even a hundredth part of what they had in the past. We are still children in the matter of Western civilisation, and we have not been yet able to make Western ways and manners our own. We are eager to obtain what in our childish inexperience and impulsiveness appears good to us. A child makes unreasonable demands upon his parents, and gives them no rest until he gets what he wants; and the parents, if they cannot grant his prayers, console him in whatever way they can, and try to lead his mind to other matters. But they do not hesitate to grant his reasonable prayers. In the same way we, too, often make many prayers to our gracious mother, the Empress of India. You are her representative; it is for you to put up with all this. For doing that, we are regarded by many as ambitious, wicked, seditious and given to exaggerating. Very close relations are now established between you and the people of India, and you will now find that all such charges are baseless. A little kind treatment melts our hearts, a little sympathy makes us happy, and a little love makes us forget everything. There are hardly any other people in this world who are pleased with so little. Nobody has ever seen such open-heartedness in exchange for courteous treatment. Give the Indians one-fold, and you will get back a thousand-fold.

You must forgive our faults and shortcomings, and correct us by good advice whenever you see us going wrong. If you lacerate our backs by whipping, the volume of our cries and laments will increase, and your trouble will consequently increase. It is needless to tell you that good advice, and not chastisement, produces good fruit. What we have learnt up to this time has



been entirely due to the favour of Englishmen. And so long as the sun and the moon last, so long will India remain bound to Englishmen in the bond of a debt which can never be extinguished. In conclusion, we have only to say that we pray to God that He may prove propitious to India and give you the mental strength and firmness to rule the country on the principles on which in England you assured the public you would conduct your work of Indian administration. If you can do that, whatever danger may befall them, the Indians will have no cause for sorrow or complaint.

BASUMATI,  
Dec. 29th, 1898.

30. The same paper heard that the members of the British Indian Association held a meeting to consider whether an address should be presented to Lord Elgin or not, and that most of the members refused to vote for an address. There is nothing to wonder at in this, if it is true. As a matter of fact, Lord Elgin has failed to satisfy any community, and even his own community is blaming him for his failure as a ruler. It is true the mercantile community of Calcutta is preparing to entertain him at a dinner, but that is not because he has succeeded as a ruler. It is only out of courtesy that the European merchants are giving him a dinner just as the Calcutta Municipality is presenting him an address. Individual members of the zamindar community may do His Excellency honour in the same manner, but that honouring will mean nothing. It does not bespeak the success of a Viceroy's rule, if at his departure his subjects do not miss him and do not shed tears for him. Lord Elgin has disappointed all the sanguine hopes which were formed at the commencement of his rule.

Lord Elgin.

DARUSSALTANAT  
AND URDU GUIDE,  
Dec. 29th, 1898.

31. The *Darussaltanat and Urdu Guide* of the 29th December says that some years ago His Excellency Lord Curzon speaking at a public meeting expressed himself strongly against intemperance. He observed that the English people were greatly addicted to intoxicating liquor and that it was due to this habit that crime was so prevalent among them. He also drew attention to the evil effects of drinking. It is to be hoped that, during the Viceroyalty of the man who has so fully realized the evils of drinking, some check will be put on the sale of spirituous liquors. The habit of drinking spirituous liquor is becoming very common among the Indian people, and to this is ascribable their increased tendency to imbibe new vices.

Lord Curzon on intemperance.

MIHIR-O-SUDHADAR,  
Dec. 30th, 1898.

32. A Musalman correspondent writing from Cuttack in the *Mihir-o-Sudhakar* of the 30th December says that the Lieutenant-Governor at Cuttack has won the love and reverence of everybody by his affability. Everybody is praising him highly and saying that no one saw before so kind, affable, and amiable a Lieutenant-Governor. On the occasion of his visit to the Kadam Rasul, the Lieutenant Governor talked on various topics with the Musalmans present there, and graciously accepted a present of *attar* and garlands.

The Lieutenant-Governor at Cuttack.

HITAVADI,  
Dec. 30th, 1898.

33. The *Hitavadi* of the 30th December has the following:—

The hallowed remembrance of the good deeds of Lord Elgin, the father, led the Indian people to expect a good deal from Lord Elgin, the son. But thanks to the cursed soil of India or the ill-luck of the Indian people, their expectations have not been fulfilled.

Lord Elgin's administration.

Now that Lord Elgin is going to leave this country, it will not be unfair to criticise his administration. During his rule there were no end of calamities. There were, in succession, famine and plague, earthquake and war. We do not, of course, hold Lord Elgin responsible for these natural calamities; it was not in his power to prevent their occurrence. But did he, we ask him, show that care, that sympathy, that skill, which were required to relieve the distress of the people? Does he, in fact, deserve the praise which the Conservative party in England is heaping upon him? We ask those who are acquainted with the state of things in this country to answer this question. Let the Secretary of State say what he may in Lord Elgin's praise, no one possessing a respect for truth and justice can speak well of his administration.

The famine all but ruined the country. Thousands of men and women died from starvation. When the effects of the famine were just beginning to



be felt, the English people came forward to help the suffering multitudes of India, but did the Viceroy at first accept that offer of help? Did he not, for the sake of maintaining the prestige of the Government, say at that time that the Government of India was able to cope with the distress without any extraneous help, and the English public were not required to raise a fund for the relief of the distressed in India? No one can say whether Lord Elgin would have at all accepted the offer of help made by the English people if the Indian National Congress had not telegraphed to England, describing the severe distress prevailing at that time. Could not many lives have been saved and the hunger of thousands satisfied if the Government had come to their relief in time?

Then comes another question. Was a proper use made of the Government money as well as of the Mansion House Fund? Even in that year of famine the Viceroy could not forego the pleasure of enjoying the cool retreats of Simla. The distress would no doubt have been materially mitigated if the people had received requisite help in all cases, and if the relief granted by the Government had been judiciously distributed. But this was not the case, as even the Famine Commission has admitted. If the Viceroy had not lulled himself to sleep on the soft and luxurious couch in his palace in Simla and gone on dreaming sweet dreams, but had personally supervised the relief measures in Calcutta, would not his efforts have been crowned with better success? Could not Lord Elgin show his sympathy with the people by curtailing the expenses of his exodus to Simla in the year of famine?

The havoc which the plague made in this country will be writ very large in the pages of history. In the Bombay Presidency, the plague and, in a far larger measure, the plague regulations gave rise to wailings. People died of plague in shoals, the families of the dead were ejected from their houses and the belongings of the dead were burnt. While the husband or son, brother or sister, father or mother was dying of plague, out of sight, in a hospital, the goods and chattels of the distressed family insulted by European soldiers searching for plague, were on fire. Such a spectacle as this would be better conceived than described. Did Lord Elgin do anything to mitigate the sufferings of the distressed multitudes? Not the plague so much as the plague regulations turned many places in the country into veritable cremation grounds. If Lord Elgin had shown some large-heartedness, the Governor of Bombay could not have adopted those rigorous plague regulations. The plague regulations have done what never was even in the dream and imagination of the Indian people.

The earthquake caused no small injury. Countless people were rendered houseless by that sad calamity! In any other civilized country the Government would no doubt have come to the rescue of the distressed people. But did the Government of this unfortunate country help the people with money? This failure to help the distressed people reflects no little discredit on Lord Elgin's administration.

We cannot speak highly of the intelligence of those who do not hold Lord Elgin responsible for the frontier war. Lord Lytton kindled a fire in Afghanistan, but could not extinguish it, and it was left for Lord Ripon to pour water on the flames. If Lord Elgin had, like Lord Ripon, made up his mind to govern the people well, if he had not failed to understand that he would incur a serious responsibility by spending the money of the poor Indian people, dear as it is to them as their very blood, in an unjust war, he would not have certainly caused so much blood to be shed and so much treasure to be wasted on the Indian frontier. If Lord Elgin had been a good ruler he would not have kindled a fire on the North-Western frontier in the year of plague and famine and earthquake.

We cannot help mentioning in this place a few more acts of Lord Elgin, such as the imprisonment of Tilak, the amendment of the Sedition law and of the Post Office Act and the introduction of the Calcutta Municipal Bill. Lord Lytton incurred the opprobrium of the Indian public by passing the Vernacular Press Act. Lord Elgin incurred the opprobrium of the people in a far larger measure by passing a much more severe and dangerous Press law. The departing Viceroy smelt sedition everywhere and had no faith in those he ruled. How could one who ruled in this way expect to be popular? To tell the truth,



the very name of Lord Elgin strikes terror into the hearts of the people. He did not regard the educated community with kindly feelings. The native Press was an eyesore to him, and this is why he amended the Sedition law and the Post Office Act.

We cannot say that Lord Elgin is in no way responsible for the Calcutta Municipal Bill. If he had been really in favour of Local Self-Government, no such measure could have been introduced in the Bengal Legislative Council. In our opinion, those who say that Lord Elgin had to do many things wrong against his will and in obedience to the Secretary of State, do not certainly speak his praise. Nothing could be more derogatory to a man's reputation than not acting independently, whenever necessary, after being entrusted with the sacred task of ruling over three hundred millions of people. If Lord George Hamilton had not heeded Lord Elgin's protests, and if, in consequence thereof, Lord Elgin had resigned his post, we would have certainly praised his strength of mind. But that was not the case, and it has been no satisfaction to us to see in Lord Elgin an obedient slave of the Secretary of State.

Lord Elgin is about to leave this country. No one can say that it does not pain him to leave behind so much pleasure and so much comfort. We have been compelled to utter many unpalatable truths on the eve of his retirement. Those who have presented him with flattering addresses are not only Lord Elgin's but also their country's enemies.

BANGAVASI,  
Dec. 1st, 1898.

34. The *Bangavasi* of the 31st December has the following with reference to the last Calcutta race:—

The race for the Viceroy's cup.

The reader is no doubt aware that betting goes on briskly on the race ground. This betting may, in our uncivilized parlance, be called gambling, but as European ladies and gentlemen of rank take an active part in it in the very presence of the Viceroy, and as the English law does not call it gambling, it may be sheer impertinence on our part to call it by that name. Let us not therefore call this betting, gambling, but satisfy ourselves only with describing what we saw on the race-course.

This year we saw many Marwaris betting on the race ground. In previous years Marwaris were not seen to muster strong on the race ground in this way. Is this the consequence of the putting down of rain-gambling?

Let us now describe how betting goes on in the race-course. We shall not waste many minutes on the small betting which goes on outside the race ground. Let us enter into the race-course where large betting goes on and where bets of less than Rs. 50 are interdicted. In this betting within the race-course, gentlemen, ladies of rank, Rajas and Maharajas, pleaders and barristers lay wagers of thousands of rupees, and thousands of rupees pass and repass from hand to hand. European ladies and gentlemen come to the race-course in their best, some ladies wearing apparel worth thousands of rupees. The fashionable ladies come in dresses of various makes and colours, walking gaily, their faces lit up with smiles. These gorgeous dresses are not for concealing the charms of the budding beauty of a sweet lass, but are intended to set off those charms. Look at that young lady dressed in green, her face lit up with a sweet smile, laying a bet of five thousand rupees on a horse. Watch her face. There, the horse on which she has laid the bet is lagging behind. It is behind one, two, three horses. Look at that face now, which was not long ago the very image of cheerfulness. That smile has left that face and the cheek is colourless. The eyes are fixed and the balls there are no longer rolling merrily.

That face is again brightening up. The colour has again returned to the cheeks. There on the race-course the horse on which the bet has been laid has come up second and the jockey is mercilessly urging it on. It now bids fair to come out first. The lady forgetting herself, has placed her hand on the shoulder of a Bengali youth, and, rising on tiptoe, is anxiously watching the movements of the horse. There, the horse has won, the lady's desire is fulfilled, and she gets eight thousand rupees.

Just think of the intoxicating influence of this play—this betting. It makes even fashionable ladies forget themselves, and care little for honour and reputation. Those who lose become desperate and go on betting till they lose all. Then when their purse becomes empty, their heart sinks in despair, and their knees knock against each other, they drown their agony in drink,



and hard drinking is a feature of the race. During a race lasting not more than four hours not less than twenty thousand rupees are spent in drink and more than two lakhs of rupees pass from hand to hand. But no, don't call this play gambling, this play which enriches many and ruins many more.

This betting on horses is an English pastime, and we have no right to criticise it. This costly pastime is not for poor people like ourselves.

35. The same paper has the following with reference to Sir Charles Elliott's article on the Indian Magistracy, published

BANGAVASI,  
Dec. 31st, 1898.

Sir Charles Elliott on the Indian Magistracy. in an English paper :—

Sir Charles Elliott has presented to the English public only one side of the shield. He has pointed out only the good qualities of an Indian Magistrate, but none of his bad qualities. He has shown him as a *ma-bap* and not as a *bapre-bap*, as one who is kindly disposed towards the people and not as the terror which he is, in many instances, to them. Sir Charles Elliott wants his readers to believe that an Indian Magistrate always kindly treats the people; that he never commits a wrong; that he is uniformly and invariably dutiful, conscientious and impartial. In whole India there is, in Sir Charles Elliott's opinion, no Magistrate who does anything discreditable, the reports we hear against them being nothing but the calumnies of malicious people. An Indian Magistrate is, in the writer's opinion, godly, immaculate and faultless. In the opening passages of the article Sir Charles Elliott has something to say about himself. He says that the malicious people who have maligned him both in India and in England are the very same who malign the Indian Magistrates at home and abroad. It is, therefore, quite clear that Sir Charles' article is not prompted by a right feeling. He has not been impartial in his defence of the Indian Magistrate, and his writing has all the fault of special pleading. Many Magistrates in India are no doubt generously disposed towards the people and treat them as kindly as their parents, but there are some Magistrates who are a terror to the people and whom the people fear as they do a venomous serpent.

36. The *Basumati* of the 5th January writes as follows :—

BASUMATI,  
Jan. 5th, 1899.

Lord Curzon's reply to the Bombay Municipal address.

Oh, the sweet, strange, heavenly voice which reached our ears the other day from far off Bombay! It was sweeter than the voice of *kinnars* (singers of heaven) and the music from Narad's harp. The reply of the new Viceroy to the welcome address of the Bombay Municipality thrilled our hearts and filled us with ecstasy. On hearing it we felt as if we saw before our eyes all the past and all the future of India, and our joy and enthusiasm knew no bounds. In fact, Lord Curzon's words were extremely sweet, simple and unostentatious. They seemed to come from his heart and had the halo of truth around them.

37. The same paper has the following :—

BASUMATI.

Lord Curzon and the people of India.

Fortunately for us, we have, after a long time, got such a noble person as Lord Curzon for our Viceroy. His calm and peaceful figure on the Indian throne impels us, we do not know why, to think that in India he will be a *karmabir* (a hero in action). On his face, beaming with genius, one discovers the stamp of dignity. He appears to us to be as intelligent as Brihaspati, as resolute as Partha, as well versed in politics as Chanakya, and as benevolent a ruler as Ram Chandra. It seems that during his rule India will become the abode of peace and prosperity. Already we see opening before us a vista of peace and happiness which it has not been our lot to enjoy for a long time. Peaceful is the path which the virtuous man treads. The very advent of Lord Curzon has been heralded by a bumper harvest, by peace on the frontier, and by the gradual disappearance of the plague.

The Civil Servants who are entrusted with the direct administration of the country are men of a different type. They look upon themselves as absolute rulers of the country and want to use their power arbitrarily. They do not like to meet with opposition in the exercise of their power and try to maintain it intact. They do not favourably look upon those who point out their faults and such men are an eyesore to them. Education has made rapid progress in course of the last fifty years. The number of educated men has increased



and is increasing. Western education has enabled them to perfectly understand their rights and privileges, and they have resolved to get them. They are freely criticising the arbitrary and unlimited powers of the Civil Servants, and also their faults and shortcomings. This, the Civil Servants cannot bear, and the breach between them and the educated natives is widening as their conduct is being more and more criticised. Both the parties are trying their best to maintain their rights and privileges, and this constant friction between them does not bode any good to the country. This general rivalry between the Civil Servant and the educated native is, no doubt, an obstacle to good administration, and the Government has felt it necessary to keep both of them in check. The European Civil Servant belongs to the ruling race and is proud of his nationality. He looks down upon the Indian people and ignores the sacred promise of our Sovereign not to make any distinction of creed or colour. All difference, all quarrel between the ruler and the ruled will cease if Englishmen treat us in a friendly manner, if they look upon us not as wild birds and beasts, but as the descendants of men who ruled whole India, who at one time excelled all other nations on earth in intelligence and understanding, whose philosophy, medical science, and astrology are still the admiration of the civilised world. We are the descendants of great ancestors and are inferior to no other nation on earth. Let the Civil Servants treat us as we ought to be treated, let them sympathise with us and we shall respect and obey them as our elder brothers. When we suffer from hunger, let them feed us like our elder brothers. When we are stricken with the plague, let them sit by our side and nurse us. In short, let them sympathise with us in our weal and woe, and our joy will know no bounds. We expect impartiality from Lord Curzon. Let him be liberal and there will be peace and happiness during his rule.

#### ASSAM PAPERS.

PARIDARSAN,  
December 14th and  
29th, 1898.

38. The *Paridarsak* of the 14th and 29th December writes as follows:—

The Sylhet Jail.

Our object in writing this is neither to make the officers of the Sylhet Jail hateful in the eye of the public nor to cause those officers unnecessary pain by publishing calumnies against them, but to do our duty faithfully. If what is stated here is false, we ask the officers concerned to publicly contradict the same in order to disabuse the public mind, and we shall thank them for their trouble in doing so.

(1). About three or four months ago Babu Giris Chandra Nag, Extra Assistant Commissioner, was for some time in charge of the Sylhet Jail in the absence of Dr. Banerji. A prisoner, named Ramu, deposed before Giris Babu, that the Jailor, Babu Ram Kumar Datta, had taken home valuable jail-made cloths such as screens, &c. For some reason or other, probably at the request of his neighbours, Giris Babu made no enquiry into the matter.

Another day, Ramu asked Giris Babu, in the presence of Babu Ram Lochan Sarma, Court Sub Inspector, why he had made no enquiry into the complaint against the Jailor, and he said that the jail officers having come to know of what he had stated had replaced the articles. The Extra Assistant Commissioner had now no alternative, but to receive the complaint and draw up proceedings against the Jailor. He did so, and in the course of the investigation it was found that the articles referred to were not entered in the stock-book. In his explanation the Jailor said that he was in the habit of taking home jail-made articles in order to show them to purchasers, and that his not entering the articles in the stock-book was an oversight. In the meantime Dr. Banerji returned to duty, and the Jailor took protection under his wings. Dr. Banerji ordered Ramu to a punishment of thirty stripes and transferred him to the Habiganj sub-jail.

If this be true we may ask (1) for what fault was Ramu punished, and (2) for what reason was a long-term prisoner transferred from the Sadar jail to a Subdivisional jail.

(2) Before the publication in this paper of the scandals relating to the Sylhet Jail, more than a *ganti* of prisoners used to be sent to cut grass for cows said to be kept in the jail. But now only one *ganti* of men is sent. The public do not know that any animals are kept in the Sylhet Jail. Is, then, the



grass which is cut sold? If it is sold, does it fetch a monthly income of Rs. 103-2, the monthly wages of a *ganti* of grass-cutters, and is any income that is derived from the sale of grass credited to Government?

(3) Is any price paid for the grass and cane which prisoners often take away from lands belonging to private owners in the town and its suburbs?

39. The same paper has the following:—

Trial by jury in Assam.

We fail to see why the jury system should not be introduced in the Surma Valley, the most enlightened portion of Assam, when the system has been in vogue in the Brahmaputra Valley for a long time. The system of trial obtaining in the Surma Valley is trial with the help of assessors. And since the High Court has ordered all mukhtars and pleaders to be exempted from service as assessors, the list of assessors has contained the names of only uneducated or ill-educated men. One can easily form an idea of the kind of help such men have been rendering to the Judges. Mr. Cotton is always anxious to place the administration of justice on an unimpeachable footing, and it is owing to him that a first-class Judge has been appointed in Sylhet. It is hoped that a ruler like him will not neglect to introduce the jury system in Sylhet.

PARIDARSAK,  
29th Agrabayan, and  
1st fortnight,  
of Pous.

40. The same paper draws the particular attention of the Government

Water scarcity in Sylhet town.

to the severe water scarcity already prevailing in Sylhet town and the high mortality which is prevailing in consequence. Most of the wells and tanks are fast drying up.

PARIDARSAK,

41. The same paper complains that no ferry boat is available at Channighat and Kalighat in Sylhet after nine o'clock in the evening. This makes people who come to the

A ferry complaint.

ghat at a later hour wait there for a ferry the whole night.

PARIDARSAK.

42. The same paper complains that, notwithstanding the Chief Commissioner's order that this paper should be supplied

Proceedings of the North Sylhet Local Board.

with a copy of the proceedings of every meeting of the North Sylhet Local Board, it has not been so favoured. The Chairman wrote some months ago promising such supply, but has not kept his promise. Why is the Local Board so anxious to conceal its proceedings from the public?

PARIDARSAK.

43. The same paper says that remembering the sufferings of the people

Water scarcity in Assam.

from water scarcity last year and in view of the circumstance that cries of water scarcity are already being heard from several directions, the authorities should make arrangements for digging wells and excavating tanks in every *busti* of every village.

PARIDARSAK.

44. The same paper says that for want of grazing-grounds in the Sylhet

Want of grazing-grounds in Sylhet town.

town it has become impossible for its residents to keep cows, and milk has become a rarity in Sylhet. There are standing orders of Government requiring grazing-grounds to be provided for cattle. But these orders are not obeyed. Grazing-grounds could be had near Kajalsar, Dubri, Haor and Igdar.

PARIDARSAK.

CHUNDER NATH BOSE,

*Bengali Translator.*

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,

*The 7th January 1899.*



